

histology of the tissues. The giving of greater weight to the study of the cell is a commendable feature and worthy of imitation.

A great deal of interesting information is scattered throughout, not only of a purely histological nature but also in regard to methods of tissue preparation, and in the form of histological notes. Neurohistology is, of course, exceptionally well treated.

It can be said without reserve that this book will be of great value to many on account of its fresh viewpoint of the subject, its wealth of facts, and its eloquent testimony to the work of the Spanish school.

Lymphatics. Lymph and Tissue Fluid. Cecil K. Drinker, B.S., M.D., Professor of Physiology, and Madeleine E. Field, A.B., Ph.D., Instructor in Physiology, Harvard School of Public Health. 254 pages. Price \$3.00. Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1933.

There is in the minds of many medical students a haziness of view in regard to the lymphatics which they retain as long as they have any views at all. Only those who do experimental work or who use special methods ever see any part of the lymphatic system except the thoracic duct and some of the outlying nodes. Consequently there is some excuse for the prevailing haze. The present volume does much towards clearing up this vagueness by defining the problems presented by the lymphatics. That they are absorptive in function is fairly well settled, but there are many things to be found out about this absorptive power. How, for instance, do particles and colloidal solutions reach the interior of the lymph capillaries: what affects their permeability? Then the question of movement of lymph in such regions as the lung is obscure.

We can heartily recommend the present volume for a clear and stimulating presentation of modern views and work on lymphatics.

Outline of Immunity. W. W. C. Topley, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S., Professor of Bacteriology and Immunology, University of London. 415 pages. Price \$5.50. Ed. Arnold, London; Macmillan Co., Toronto, 1933.

A book which will outline a subject of such complexity as immunity is to be warmly welcomed. But Prof. Topley rightly reminds us that "it (immunity) is a hybrid creature, not quite sure of its true affiliations. It wanders, a little uneasily, between Departments of Pathology, Bacteriology, and Hygiene. At times it makes an attempt—which some of us think misguided—to set up house all by itself." But whatever its nature, there is little doubt that the average general practitioner shies away from the subject of immunity. This is because the exponents of the subjects have been, in Prof. Topley's words, "more than a little incoherent in speech." It is a question whether even yet the terms employed in immunity are not too obscure and cause too much puzzling. Dr. Topley's book gives one the comfortable sense of taking only the best ascertained facts and leaving the theories alone as much as possible. Not that it is easy reading; there is too much packed into it for that. But it may safely be recommended as one of the soundest and most carefully written shorter treatises on immunity which has yet appeared.

To Be or Not to Be. A Study of Suicide. Louis I. Dublin, Ph.D., Third Vice-president and Statistician, and Bessie Bunzel, M.A., Research Assistant, Statistical Bureau, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. 443 pages. Price \$3.50. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, New York, 1933.

When Louis Dublin publishes a book on any subject the reader expects to be intrigued by the skill, and almost legerdemain, with which the author ar-

ranges and re-arranges the statistical data at his disposal. This volume is not disappointing. It does exactly what it sets out to do, that is to say, puts "in order material chaotic in its crude state." One is inclined to ask what use it is to know that there is a certain correlation between suicide death rates and economic conditions; that in one year in the United States, 22,000 suicides are recorded, that "out of every one thousand infants born, ten males and three females will eventually take their own lives"; that "more women attempt suicide, but more men than women complete the act", or "that less suicides occur among married persons than among single, widowed or divorced", etc. But, after all, it probably is valuable to have the ground cleared and the facts as to suicide compiled.

A section on the histological background of suicide contains a number of interesting facts not generally known. There are, for instance, certain tribes in widely different geographical areas to whom suicide is unknown; there are others in which it is quite prevalent, perhaps because tribal custom makes of it an honourable or courageous act, or demands it under certain circumstances. The chapters on the legal aspects of suicide with special reference to insurance are timely and indicate the prevalent attitude that suicide is an abnormal reaction almost indicative of "*non compos mentis*," *per se*. They give in some detail the early legal attitude towards self-destruction in Greece and Rome and England. In England, ignominious burial and confiscation of property were statutory penalties until the nineteenth century. In most European countries suicide has been regarded as a crime, although it is said that the French laws after the Revolution gave the right to take one's own life. It is also pointed out that, in the United States, suicide is not a crime.

A rather long section on psychological mechanisms smacks roundly of psychoanalysis. As a dissertation on this subject, it is popularly and interestingly presented. As a contribution to the interpretation of suicidal behaviour, however, it seems to leave us where we began. The last chapter on Mental Hygiene is provocative, and is perhaps the most constructive in its suggestions.

The Physician's Art. Alexander George Gibson. 237 pages. Price \$2.25. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1933.

In 1669 John Locke, the physician-poet-philosopher, wrote a brief treatise, entitled *De Arte Medica*, which, unfortunately, he did not complete. From this we gather that his analytical mind led him to anticipate the betterment of the art of medicine by a closer union of principles with clinical practice. Had he carried out his plan to formulate a system for medicine, Doctor Gibson thinks "he would have attempted to determine and criticize the larger principles of the art as they have appeared to the reflective physician of every age—principles that are not dependent on the state of the science of medicine." Doctor Gibson reprints Locke's fragment and devotes the substance of his own contribution to what he conceives to be the fundamentals of the medical art, basing his thesis on the same conception that Locke puts forward, but without any intent to expand Locke's thought. A good idea of Doctor Gibson's treatment of his subject can be gathered from the titles of his chapters. He deals in his introductory chapter with the pertinent details of Locke's life, and discusses the *De Arte Medica* in a sympathetic manner; then prints Locke's production. This is followed by chapters entitled Art and Science, Of Diagnosis, Of Prognosis, Of Treatment, The Ethics and Management of Practice, Of the Doctor Himself, and Optimism.

Doctor Gibson is a physician and pathologist, a teacher also in a noted school of medicine; it is clear, from his book, that he possesses the analytical and